belonging to INS Virat recently near Madras; and

(b) if so, what are the findings of the enquiry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) Yes, Sir

(b) The Board of Inquiry is in progress. The findings of the Board are treated as classified and not disclosed in the public interest.

Agreement Regarding Devolution of Powers to Provincial Councils in Sri Lanka

264. SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V ARUNACHALAM: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of India have urged upon the Sri Lankan Government to take prompt steps for merge of the Eastern and Northern provinces in Sri Lanka and for the devolution of powers to the provincial council; and

(b) if so, what is the progress of the negotiations with Government of Sri Lanka?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI K NATWAR SINGH): (a) and (b) In terms of the Indo-Sri Lanka Agreement the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka will form one administrative unit from the date of Provincial Council elections in these provinces. The Government of Sri Lanka have reaffairmed their commitment to the merger on several occasions, the last such occasion, being the Presidential Communique dated June 30, 1988.

Regarding the devolution of powers, the Sri Lanka Government have enacted the necessary legislation to set up Provincial council and for devolving powers to them. They have also assured the Government that suitable changes, and improvements in the devolution package will be brought about after Provincial council elections are over in all the provinces.

Tamils Killed in Sri Lanka

265. SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of Tamils who have been killed due to military offensive by I.P.K.F. so far; and

(b) how many Indian soldiers have lost their lives in military operations in Sri Lanka so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI CHINTAMANI PANIGRAHI): (a) In an operation of this kind, it is not possible to determine the exact number of civilians/militants killed.

(b) Upto 17.7.1988, 511 IPKF personnel were killed in the operations in Sri Lanka.

Agreement between WAPCOS and LBI

266. SHRI PRABHAKAR RAO KALVALA: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Water and Power Consultancy Service (India) Limited (WAPCOS), a Government of India Undertaking, have entered into any agreement with the LOUIS BERGER INTERNATIONAL; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and the progress made in this regard so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRIMATI KRISHNA SAHI): (a) Under the USAID assisted Irrigation Management and Training Project, the WAPCOS have signed a Memorandum of Un-